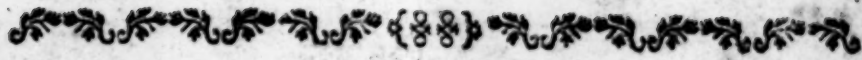


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A N

E S S A Y

O N

W O M A N.



62



M. A. M. O.

P

AN

ESSAY

ON

WOMAN.



L O N D O N :

Printed for E. SUMPTER, in FLEET-STREET.  
MDCCLXIV.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

**I**T is of little Importance to the Public to know how the following Pages came into the Hands of the Publisher; suffice it to say that they are *genuine*. Mr. WILKES's Character, *as a Patriot*, is universally known:——perhaps this Pamphlet may set his Character, *as a Man*, in a new Light.

Certain Persons, eminent for their exalted Stations, and *for nothing else*, have taken great Pains to represent Mr. WILKES as a Devil incarnate: Whether he is or is not the Person he has been represented, will, in some Measure, appear from this Publication.

The Frontispiece to this Essay is now Engraving by the *only Person* who could be found *hardy enough* to undertake it; and it will be delivered Gratis to the Purchasers of this Pamphlet, as soon as it is finished.

LONDON, Feb. 14, 1764.





WE SAY

ON

WOMAN.

**A** WAKE, my CELIA, leave all meaner things,  
And seek the source from whence all pleasure  
springs.

Let us since life can little more supply,  
Than just to love awhile and then to die,  
Expatiate free this scene of woman o'er,  
No matter whether virtuous or a \*\*\*\*\*.

B

A

COMMENTARY.

VER. 2. This passage cannot be better elucidated, than by the words of the celebrated Montesquieu author of the Spirit of Laws. Speaking of that disease which occasioned Sannazarius's beautiful poem, entitled Siphylis, he expresses himself in these terms, " Dans ce siecle lor une maladie nouvelle apparue dans le monde, une maladie qui prit naissance dans la source des plaisirs et de la vie." Some learned critics are of opinion, that by the word *source* we should, in this place, understand the heart, but this interpretation appears forced and unnatural.

G.

A garden in whose center \*\*\* takes root ;  
 A tree that tempts us with forbidden fruit.  
 Together let us beat this ample field,  
 And try what toys \*\*\* can yield,

10

The

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 6. *Hiatus magnus lacrymabilis!* Much is it to be lamented, that the joint labours of the learned Dr. W——, the indefatigable Dr. Bentley, and myself, could never supply this chasm in the MSS. It is, however, obvious from the metre, that the word here omitted must be a monosyllable.

*Martinus Scriblerus.*

VER. 7. *In whose centre, etc.]* The depredations of time have made sad havock in literature. Here follows another chasm which we have not, by our most laborious researches, been able to fill up, and many such will occur in this poetical essay.

*Scriblerus.*

VER. 10. *And try what toys.]* Miserably indeed hath the most erudite W—— hallucinated in his conjectural restoration of this passage. Who sees not that the epithet *luscious* can't be given to fruit, without doing violence to the vernacular idiom. For my part, I am inclined to think it is as hard a matter to fill up this Hiatus as to assign the *rationale* of that *pudor circa res venereas*, which, as the learned Dr. Nicholls justly observes, can never be accounted for without recurring to the fountain-head of revelation. In a word, I own this is a gordian knot which I can neither cut nor untie, and surely, surely no little critic should undertake it.

*Bentley.*

## NOTES.

VER. 10. *And try what toys, etc.]* Many critics of great learning and sagacity have despaired of restoring the words here omitted. After having scrutinized the passage according to the strict canons of verbal criticism, I, without the least scruple or doubt, propose the following reading,



## ESSAY ON WOMAN,

3

The latent parts, the parts reveal'd explore  
 Of all that's lovely, all that men adore ;  
 Examine beauty with attentive eyes,  
 And catch new charms as to the view they rise,  
 Laugh where we must, be candid where we can, 15  
 And shew that woman was design'd for Man.  
 From crown to toe in woman how can we  
 Judge of things unseen but from what we see ?  
 Of woman see we much more than her face,  
 Her hands or breast wherein her charms to trace ? 20  
 Tho' fancy into hidden parts may pry,  
 The only judge of beauty is the eye.  
 He who the hardest riddle can unfold,  
 Or hear unmov'd the clamours of a scold,  
 Recount each caprice of the female mind, 25  
 And tell why woman is or is not kind ;  
 Observe the springs which sex to sex unite,  
 And penetrate the source of soft delight :

What

### COMMENTARY.

VER. 20. We have not therefore an opportunity of forming a judgment of a woman's beauty, without seeing her when divested of that attire, which, though in some measure intended to set off beauty, conceals some of the most striking beauties from spectators. G.

VER. 28. *And penetrate, etc.*] This passage has certainly been corrupted. Our author, who is remarkable for strict

### NOTES.

And try what toys such luscious fruits can yield.  
 Sic lege meo periculo.

G.

What varied shapes each hour a female takes,  
 May tell why women at their hearts are rakes. 30  
 He who obscure ænigmas can pervade,  
 May tell why woman was a riddle made.  
 But of a woman all the various wiles,  
 The artful glances or the practis'd smiles,  
 Kens't thou? or dost thou with pervading mind, 35  
 Fathom the depths profound of woman-kind?

Has

## COMMENTARY.

strict propriety of expression, could never have used a phrase, in which the *callida junctura* of Horace is so strangely inverted, as in this of penetrating a source. The author certainly wrote .

And mount up to the source of soft delight. G.

VER. 29. *What varied shapes, etc.*] Virgil speaks of female inconstancy in the following terms,

Varium et mutabile semper feminæ.

This sarcastic expression has inspired some with an opinion, that he would have succeeded better in satyr than Juvenal, Perseus, or Horace. The words are strong but much less emphatical than those of Shakespear.

Frailty thy name is woman!

As I neglected inserting this remark in my annotations upon Shakespear, I thought it could not be introduced with greater propriety, than in my commentary upon an Essay on Woman.

VER. 35. *Ken'st thou?*] Upon my first inspection of this passage, I apprehended that some error had crept into the manuscript, the word *ken* being borrowed from the Scottish idiom, and seldom used by the poets of this nation. But as the Scotch word *ken* is often used by the great Milton, such an authority seems to consecrate it to poetry; and any author may adopt it with impunity, without fear of being cited before the tribunal of criticism.



## ESSAY ON WOMAN.

5

Has the great sympathy which still imparts  
Joy to the sexes, risen in their hearts?

Weak

### COMMENTARY.

The word is to be met with in the first book of *Paradise Lost*.

As far as angels ken he views

The dismal situation, &c.

Again in *Comus*,

And if I ken him right, a spirit pure

As treads the spangled pavement of the sky.

*Martinus Scriblerus.*

VER. 36. *Fathom the depth profound, etc.*] The metaphor is here somewhat of the strongest, yet still it hardly appears strong enough. The depths of woman, in one sense, are not to be fathomed, though in another they possibly may. The following line of Virgil may be properly applied to a woman, "*Spelunca alta fuit, vastoque immanis hiatu,*" which passage I shall not translate, least by the Hiatus some might think an allusion made to something very far from the Hiatus in writing marked out in this manner \*\*\*. G.

VER. 37. *Has the great sympathy.*] The great sympathy evidently means the principle spoken of by Cicero in his offices, when he tells us, that all animals are impelled by a natural appetite to the propagation of their species. But how to fill up the Hiatus which followed, has, I own, somewhat puzzled me. Reflecting however, upon the observation of an antient philosopher, that the source of a man's passion for his mistress is very far from her heart, I am inclined to think that the author wrote

Has the great sympathy that still attracts

The sexes, rise in lust or in their hearts?

This reading may, perhaps, be thought a little indelicate; but the celebrated author of the essay, whose works I have likewise commented, has made use of the word lust upon a similar occasion.

Lust thro' some certain strainers well refin'd,



Weak woman if thou would'st the reason find,  
 Why nature made thee so to stray inclin'd;  
 First, if thou can'st, the secret cause explore,  
 Why thou wert not inclin'd to follies more.  
 Ask of thy mother why, her husband dead,  
 She still in weeds a second time must wed?  
 Or ask each wretch that plies on Ludgate-hill, 45  
 Why once a whore she so continues still?  
 Of pleasures possible, if 'tis confess'd  
 That those of love must ever be the best;  
 Where the soul always satisfi'd must be,  
 And rise to rapture in a due degree; 50  
 A woman then must be allow'd the plan,  
 The source of true delight to mortal man;

And

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 47. *Of Pleasures.*] There cannot be a stronger proof of the truth of the position advanced in these two lines, than the declaration of Cardanus, who, tho' a grave man and a physician, acknowledged that no distress ever afflicted him more than his being, by a disease, deprived for some months of any sort of commerce with the fair-sex.

VER. 49. *Where the soul.*] I cannot more fully elucidate this passage, than by citing what the author of the Essay on Man has said of Virtue, when he calls it,

The only point where human bliss stands still,  
 And feels the good without the fall to ill.

If this be true, with regard to virtue, it is no less so with regard to that love which is inspired by beauty; and a modern philosopher has justly observed that beauty and virtue are synonymous terms.

G.

## ESSAY ON WOMAN.

7

And all the question, wrangle as you will,  
**Is** only this, Does love produce no ill?  
 Whatever evils love seems to produce, 55  
 Owe not their rise to love, but its abuse.  
 The other passions labour oft in vain  
 A thousand movements, scarce one purpose gain;

One

### COMMENTARY.

VER. 54. [*Is only this, etc.*] The question is altogether absurd, love can never be productive of any evil, tho' the coition of persons who have no real affection for each other, is productive of the worst of evils, and the worst of diseases. That detestable disease so admirably described by the learned Fracastorius in his *Siphylis*, owed its rise entirely to a commerce between persons whose souls did not attract each other by a mutual sympathy. Sympathy is the foundation of love, for, as Corneille admirably expresses it,

There are in nature certain sympathies,  
 By which congenial souls are link'd together;  
 Whose powerful influence attracts the heart,  
 By some enchantment not to be explain'd.

I cite an anonymous translation, as the French original is not generally known to English readers.

*Bentley.*

VER. 57. [*The other.*] Our author here seems to be guilty of a little inadvertency. What he advances here is not true of all the other passions. Hatred produces its effect in as instantaneous a manner as love, and like it operates by a single glance. Indeed there seems to be a re-action in minds as well as bodies; and I have often been inclined to think that love and hatred are mutual as well as reciprocal. Such slight errors as this, may very well be overlook'd in a poem upon so abstruse a subject. *Opere in longa fas est obrepere somnum.*

G.

## ESSAY ON WOMAN:

One glance of love affection can produce,  
To fan the fire each gesture may conduce. 60

Thus she who seems to love one man alone,  
Perhaps, has many more gallants unknown;  
For woman has a vast capacious soul,  
One object ne'er can occupy the whole.

When the proud stallion of some courtly dame, 65  
Shall know with whom she's done before the fame;  
When the dull husband, us'd to scoffs and scorns,  
Shall know who gave him his first pair of horns;  
Then shall that riddle, woman, comprehend,  
To what her strange capricious follies tend; 70  
Why she's this day ador'd, the next despis'd,  
Now kick'd down stairs, now prais'd or idoliz'd.

Then

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 61. *Thus she, etc.*] The conduct of some ladies of quality, make it highly probable, that if there had ever been a female legislator, she would have inverted the ordinances of Mahomet, and instead of allowing several women to one man, would have allowed every woman as many men as she was in circumstances to keep.

Bentley.

VER. 63. *For woman.*] History furnishes many examples that confirm the truth of this observation. Messalina amongst the Romans, Fredegonde amongst the French, and Catharine Howard amongst the English, sufficiently prove, that

Woman has a vast capacious soul.

G.

## NOTE.

VER. 71. *Why she's this day.*] The various turns of fortune in the life of a woman of the town, have produced ma-

# ESSAY ON WOMAN.

9

Then call not woman nature's fair defect,  
 For all have merit; sure, in one respect;  
 Can give, when taken in a proper place, 75  
 Joys infinite, in one short moment's space.  
 Heav'n from all women hides the book of fate,  
 All but the page prescrib'd their present state;  
 From maids what wives, from wives what misses know,  
 Or soon we'd see confusion here below! 80  
 The girl her mother dooms to wed to day,  
 Had she born children would she skip and play?

C

Pleas'd

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 73. *Then call not women, etc.*] Our author here has borrowed a phrase from the sublime Milton.

——— Oh why did God

Creator wise, who peopl'd highest heaven

With spirits masculine, create at last

This novelty on earth, this fair defect of nature?

*Bentley.*

VER. 74. *For all have merit.*] I own myself somewhat puzzled to find the true sense of this passage. I have sometimes apprehended that the author meant to pay a compliment to the fair-sex, by acknowledging that every woman has some good quality, and that *Monstrum nulla virtute redemptum a vitis*, is not of the FEMININE GENDER; but upon mature deliberation, I am inclined to think the au-

## NOTES.

ny historical narratives; and none have appeared more delectable to readers, than those which have been written by the ladies themselves.

G.

VER. 76. *Joys infinite, etc.*] Infinite, in one short moment? Who does not see the absurdity of such an expres-



Pleas'd to the last she seeks the nuptial bed,  
 And pain or grief ne'er enters once her head.  
 This happy blindness to all future ill, 85  
 Makes each the purpose of dame nature fill;  
 Who sees unmov'd as mother of them all,  
 A haughty dutchess on a sempstress fall,  
 Riots in brothels, jars in houses bred,  
 Now a clap got, and now a maidenhead. 90  
 Enjoy discretely and with prudence soar,  
 Consult the glass, and Venus' power adore,  
 What bliss she gives 'tis not for me to shew,  
 That bliss you best will from experience know;  
 The hope of pleasure warms the female breast, 95  
 But pleasure tasted always is the best.

A woman's

## COMMENTARY.

thor's intention in this obscure passage, was *crucem figere grammaticis*, to puzzle commentators. G.

## NOTES.

sion? *Risum teneatis amici?* Tho' our author sometimes hallucinates in his expressions, he never was capable of writing nonsense. Undoubtedly he wrote,

Joys exquisite in one short moments space.  
 And so read the passage at my peril.

Bentley.

VER. 91. A woman that's too lavish of her favours is likely to make a poor hand of her beauty. The author in this couplet, gives an admirable lesson to the ladies who frequent Covent-Garden. G.

VER. 94. *Experientia docet* is a maxim that deserves to be written in letters of gold. G.

A woman's still uneasy whilst at home ;  
 In quest of pleasures all the town she'll roam.  
 Lo the poor street-walker who hears the wind,  
 And thinks the bailiff follows her behind ; 100  
 Her soul prou'd opulence ne'er taught to stray,  
 Far as the park or ball, the ring or play ;  
 Yet paint oft makes her faded beauty shine,  
 And a cull treats her to a pint of wine :  
 She in some tavern's blest in his embrace, 105  
 She tastes love's pleasure, and ne'er heeds the place ;  
 There

COMMENTARY.

VER. 105.] Certain it is that love can make a paradise of the most wretched hole ; for as the poet says, speaking of his mistress,

Thou e'en from dungeons darkness can exclude,  
 And from a desert banish solitude.

But the happiness here spoken of, springs from a more solid cause than love, namely, a good supper and a bottle of wine. Compare this description of the life of a woman of the town, with that given by Parminio, in the Eunuch of Terence, and it will convince you that a prostitute of antient Athens, is as like one of our modern prostitutes who ply in the Strand, as an Asiatic Jew is like a Jew born in Europe. G.

NOTES.

VER. 96. *But pleasure tasted, etc.*] Here some error has doubtless disfigured the MS. *mecum audaciter sic lege.*

But pleasure when enjoy'd is always best.

Bentley.

VER. 99. *Lo! the poor street-walkers, etc.*] A pathetic description of the miseries of a woman of the town. 'Tis really a disgrace to the legislature, that persons so necessary for the prevention of domestic debauchery, should ever be

There the starv'd wretch once more a supper fees,  
 No fiends torment, nor bailiff duns for fees.  
 To eat, contents her natural desire,  
 She feels not Cupid's darts, nor amorous fire ; 110  
 But thinks that love, that raptures, and that flames,  
 Are all unmeaning, idle, empty names.  
 Go foolish girl who by romance misled,  
 With sentiment and passion stuff your head ;  
 Call that unkindness which thou fanciest such, 115  
 See, now man courts too little, now too much ;  
 Rule all your lovers with despotic sway,  
 Then weakly let the husband have his way.  
 Torment all lovers for thy sport or gust,  
 Yet say whoever leaves you is unjust. 120

If

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 120.] I cannot better elucidate this passage, than by the following epigram of Congreve:

Pious Zelinda goes to prayers,  
 Whene'er I ask the favour ;  
 And yet the tender fool's in tears,  
 If I attempt to leave her.

## NOTES.

reduced to such distress, and seems to run counter to the spirit of the gospel, whose divine founders repressed the fury of the rabble just upon the point of stoning a harlot by these words, *Let him that is without sin throw the first stone.* G

VER. 113. *Go foolish girl, etc.*] This passage shews that the author has adopted the maxims of modern ladies of quality, who look upon love as a mere commerce of interest, in which a woman is to make the best bargain she can for herself. G.

# ESSAY ON WOMAN.

13

If you alone engross not man's whole care,  
Prais'd by him as the witty, young and fair ;  
Proceed upon a high imperious plan,  
Put on the breeches, be yourself a man.

In pride, my CELIA, female folly lies, 125  
All women strive above their sphere to rise.  
Pride still imaginary merit boasts,  
Girls just not ugly would fain be toasts.  
The name of toasts whilst these can ne'er obtain,  
Aspiring to be angels, toast are vain : 130  
And she who covets undeserv'd applause,  
Upon herself a general censure draws.  
Ask why beaux croud at rout, at ball, at play,  
Pride says, to view the charms that I display :  
My powerful charms ne'er fail to touch the heart, 135  
For me the beaux, the daffodil, the smart,

Each

## COMMENTARY.

Would I were free from this restraint,  
Or else had hopes to win her ;  
Would she could make of me a saint,  
Or I of her a sinner ?

VER. 128. *Girls just not ugly, etc.*] Much diligence and study have I expended to little purpose, to come at the etymology of the word *toast*. Something like our practice of giving toasts was in use among the Romans, but I have not yet made a thorough disquisition into this subject.

*Bentley.*

## NOTES.

VER. 136. *For me the beaux, etc.*] This name of Daffodil is given in a farce called the Male-Coquet, to a sort of



Each night at ball, or at assembly shine,  
 To touch, to ravish every heart is mine.  
 For me Indostan all its jewels sends,  
 Poet with poet in my praise contends; 140  
 To adorn me land and ocean are explor'd,  
 Where'er I go by men I am ador'd.  
 But don't misfortunes sometimes here take place,  
 Does not the dire small-pox all charms deface?  
 Is beauty then exempt from pains or woes? 145  
 Has not a beauty often lost her nose?

Such

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 140. *Poet with poet, etc.*] To celebrate beauty has been the chief business of poets in all ages; and this we should not be surprized at, since as the ingenious Monf. de Fontenelle has prettily observed, if we enquire into the origin of sciences, it will be found that astronomy owes its existence to curiosity, geometry to avarice, and poetry to love. G.

VER. 144. *Does not the dire, etc.*] Divines and moralists who have written upon the frailty of beauty, have insisted much upon its being liable to be blasted by every disease to which the human frame is subject; but the influence of beauty which is founded upon sense, will never be weaken'd by abstract reasoning. G.

## NOTES.

modern Narcissus, who is in love with his own sweet person, and quite indifferent to the charms of beauty. Here it is used in the general and vague signification of a fop or coxcomb. G.

VER. 146. *Has not a beauty, etc.*] The ravages of that cruel disease here alluded to, and admirably described by the learned physician Fracastorius, in his excellent poem entitled Siphylis, to which we refer the reader. The cele-

# ESSAY ON WOMAN.

15

Such instances as these you'll make reply,  
 Prove nothing; beauties must like others die.  
 If some their charms have lost, still beauties power  
 Exists and makes new conquests every hour. 150  
 If life itself at length must find an end,  
 Why to be lasting should our charms pretend?  
 Unfading beauty would as strange appear  
 As summer-weather during all the year.  
 If rains and storms don't nature's charms deface, 155  
 Why then hump'd shoulders or an ugly face?  
 'Tis pride, 'tis pride that rules the female heart,  
 Grown old, a woman plays the youthful part;  
 For every age there is deportment fit,  
 Why does she not to times decree submit? 160  
 Perhaps

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 158. 'Tis so common for women to conceal their age, that. as a justly celebrated author observes, when a woman owns herself to be thirty-four, it is reasonable to think she is forty. G.

VER. 159. *For every age, etc.*] Women should above all things be careful to observe that golden rule of Horace,

*Singula quæque locum teneant sortita decentir.*

Of which, as few of the sex have the happiness of understanding Latin, I shall here present them with a translation,  
*Let all things decently occupy the place allotted them.*

## NOTES.

brated Dr. Swift has admirably described the depredations made upon beauty by disease in the following lines.

When Mercury her tresses mows,  
 To think of black-lead combs is vain;  
 No painting can restore a nose,  
 Nor will her lips return.

Perhaps for woman it might best appear,  
 If chastity did still inhabit here :  
 If the Strand never saw a single punk ;  
 If at B—b D——y's whores got never drunk :  
 But whores thrive best 'midst drunken broils and  
 strife,

165

And dull tranquility is for the wife.  
 Orders, which first in families began,  
 Still to disturb will be some woman's plan.  
 What mean these women ? Will they ever soar ?  
 Tho' adoration's paid them, ask they more ?  
 Or must they grieve, and think it a reproach  
 They can't like boatmen row, or drive a coach ?  
 Made

170

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 162. *If chastity, etc.*] Alludes to the first lines of Juvenal's third satyr.

Credo pudicitiam Saturno rege moratam  
 In terris visamq; diu.—

Thus paraphrased by a modern satyrst,  
 Dame Chastity without dispute  
 Liv'd in the days of good king Brute.

Since I am upon Juvenal I can't pass by an emendation that has just occurred to me. All the common editions must certainly be defective, therefore read the above passage thus

Cedo pudicitiam Saturno rege moratum  
 In terris viamsq; diu.—

Bentley.

VER. 172. *They can't like boatmen, etc.*] A celebrated modern satyrst ascribes the strange ambition of the ladies, to rival the men in rowing, running, leaping five-bar'd gates, &c. to the love of fame.

# ESSAY ON WOMAN.

17

Made for her use, all mankind if she call,

Say what their use had she the arts of all?

Nature to men without profusion kind,

175

Proper abilities and powers assign'd;

Each seeming want compensated of course,

Here with degrees of genius, there of force:

Exactly suited to each different state,

That none with reason might complain of fate.

180

If men in various states content can find,

To women only then is heaven unkind.

D

Shall

## COMMENTARY.

They drive, row, run, with love of glory smit,  
Leap, swim, shoot flying, and pronounce on wit.

*Young's Satires.*

If this be the case, the ladies of Great Britain never carried their ambition as far as those of antient Rome, where it was customary for women of the first quality to enter the lists with gladiators. Thus Juvenal

Quem præstare potest mulier gabata pudorem  
Quæ fugit a sexu?

*Bentley.*

## NOTES.

VER. 175. It seems to be generally acknowledged, that the state of womankind in this world is more destitute and defenceless than that of man; but this is amply compensated for, by man's thinking it incumbent upon him to become upon every occasion her protector.

VER. 178. *Here with degrees of genius, etc.*] The inhabitants of those countries, where genius has most flourished, such as Greece, Italy, France, and England, have never, since they were civilized, been equal in strength of body to the savages of America. In proportion as a nation is polished, its inhabitants become soft and effeminate: thus we



Shall she alone whom fair we justly call,  
 Be pleas'd with nothing if not bless'd with all ?  
 The bliss of woman, could but fools be wise, 185  
 From solid joys not fancies, must arise ;  
 No cares or wishes should her soul perplex,  
 But what are suited to her state and sex.  
 Why can't she, like the sages, nature scan ?  
 For this plain reason ; woman's not a man. 190  
 Say what the use of higher intellects,  
 To see, what seen, would grieve her own defects ?  
 Too

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 185. The author seems here to have in some measure forgot the respect due to the sex : for this he is doubtless to be reprehended ; for if Juvenal's maxim be true

*Maxima debetur pueris reverentior*

it cannot be denied, that women should be privileged from being told of their faults with any acrimony or asperity of language.

*Bentley.*

VER. 187. *No cares or wishes, etc.*] The great Homer himself seemed to disapprove of women meddling with matters that are out of their sphere : thus when Andromache talks to Hector of the manner in which the enemy was posted, he desires her to go home and ply the distaff among her maids, adding

The war shall be conducted by men.

Moliere has ridiculed their pedantic turn to learning. These authorities corroborate that of our author's.

G.

## NOTES.

see that in every country, people of the lower class surpass their superiors in bodily strength and vigour of limbs.

VER. 192. *To see what seen, etc.*] The celebrated author of the Essay on Man, observes, that wisdom is nothing else but

Too sensible to ridicule of wits,  
 To be by every jest thrown into fits?  
 Or scornful eye quick darting thro' the brain, 195  
 Dye of a look in intellectual pain.  
 If she should hear the scandal, which each dame  
 Of prudish character, throws on her fame,  
 How would she wish she ne'er had seen the town,  
 But liv'd obscure, a stranger to renown. 200  
 What woman's character's without a blot,  
 Whether she swerve from virtue's laws or not?  
 From the poor cottage to the monarch's throne,  
 The sex's powerful influence is known :

Mark

COMMENTARY.

VER. 197. *If she should hear, etc.*] Dr. Young, speaking of the detraction and calumny which generally prevail at tea-table conversations, expresses himself in the following terms,

Tea ! how I tremble at thy direful steam,  
 Like Lethe, fatal to the love of fame.

A tea-table, indeed, may be not improperly compared to an inquisition, and the ladies who sit upon a reputation, seldom fail to deliver it over to the secular arm. G.

VER. 201. Shakespear expresses this admirably in his tragedy of Hamlet, " Be you as chaste as ice, as cold as snow, " you shall not escape the tongue of calumny. G.

NOTES.

To know how little can be known  
 To see all other's faults and feel our own.

VER. 203. The influence of love extends to all the various conditions of human life, as well as to all the various species of animals that people heaven, earth, and seas

Amor omnibus idem.

Mark how it mounts to Sir John and his grace, 205  
 From waiters and the party-colour'd race!  
 What various modes of sentiment are seen,  
 'Twixt the street-walker and the tragic queen:  
 Of delicacy, 'twixt the servant maid  
 And dutchess, proudly flaunting in brocade: 210  
 Of scolding, from the style of Billingsgate,  
 To the politer railings of the great:  
 Romantic ladies, sentiments how fine!  
 The lover's raptures must be all divine:

In

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 209. *Of delicacy, etc.*] The race of Abigails are by no means remarkable for delicacy, yet they assume the airs and even the titles of their mistresses. G.

VER. 211. *Of scolding, etc.*] The language of Billingsgate is so perfect a model of that species of eloquence called invective, that political writers are much to be commended for giving some attention to it, as well as to Cicero and Demosthenes. G.

## NOTES.

VER. 205. And yet the outward demonstrations of this passion are varied *ad infinitum*. The sailor at Wapping makes love in a very different style from the courtier at St. James's; and we are told by Suetonius, that Caligula often made his mistress this polite compliment, *Tam pulchra cervicæ simulac jussere cadet*. G.

VER. 208. *'Twixt the street-walker, etc.*] The refinement and politeness of the latter are equalled by the coarse expressions and indecent behaviour of the former. G.

VER. 213. *Romantic ladies sentiments, etc.*] Some of these ladies carry their refinements in love so far, that they may be justly said to miss the substance of love by catching at the shadow of it. G.

# ESSAY ON WOMAN.

21

In the nice prude, what taste exact and just 215  
 Knows to enjoy love's pleasures with true gust:  
 How passion varies in the city dame,  
 From the refin'd, romantic ladies flame;  
 'Twixt Platonism, and that nice barrier  
 Keeps them still sep'rate, tho' they're ever near; 220  
 Friendship to tender love how near allyd,  
 What thin partitions love from lust divide!  
 How middle nature's to unite incline,  
 Yet never pass the insuperable line!  
 Without this just gradation could there be 225  
 In love engagements, blest variety?  
 Could ev'ry joy be woman's lot alone,  
 Since love all various joys unites in one.  
 Throughout this vast metropolis behold,  
 How love in bonds can every mortal hold; 230  
 How

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 215. *In the nice prude, etc.*] The most prudish ladies generally have the most solid views in their love-engagements. I could prove the truth of this by examples, but that would be an invidious task. G.

VER. 217. *How passion, etc.*] City ladies discover as gross a taste in love affairs as in their dress. G.

VER. 219. *'Twixt Platonism and that, etc.*] Platonism is lust refined through its many strainers, that it may be considered as quite evaporated away, whilst there remains only the pure flame of love. It may not improperly, indeed, be called the quietism of love; and we may say of it in the words of the author of the *Essay on Man*, that it is

The only point where human bliss stands still.

G.



How much in proud high life intrigues abound ;  
 How love in those of lowest rank is found.  
 Great mystery which from woman first began ;  
 For love's great art by her was taught to man ;  
 Wife, widow, mistress, all do what they can, 235  
 The main chance to secure, that is a man.  
 Should a man treat a woman with neglect,  
 He should a full return of scorn expect.  
 Whene'er a woman suffers lover's flight,  
 She seldom fails him amply to requite ; 240  
 And tho' the affront receiv'd should be but small,  
 Vengeance is sure upon his head to fall.  
 And if a thousand whims for ever roll  
 Upon the surface of a female soul ;

If

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 226. *In love-engagement, etc.*] Variety is the idol of the sex, and a new intrigue, like a new fashion, has potent charms for the fair. G.

VER. 228. *Since love, etc.*] It has been justly observed by a modern author, that love is not properly one passion but a complication of all the passions of the human breast. G.

VER. 230. *How love in bonds, etc.*] There are, perhaps, as many ladies of pleasure in London as in any city of Europe. G.

VER. 231. A justly celebrated author observes, that women of quality carry on an intrigue with a dignity of impudence, which their inferiors can never attain to. G.

VER. 232. The learned authors of the last remark, has over-looked a manifest error in the reading, and, indeed, in every thing that relates to verbal criticism he most miserably hallucinates.

# ESSAY ON WOMAN.

23

If she's thwarted but in one, then all  
Her rage is rous'd, and she begins to bawl.  
To the earth's center let her husband fly,  
Let not a servant venture to be nigh ;  
Let e'en the lap-dog hang his drooping head,  
And trembling hide himself behind the bed :

245

250

The

## COMMENTARY.

Was there ever a more nonsensical line than  
How much in proud high life intrigues abound.  
Why proud and high are synonymous terms. Thus read  
the lines at my peril.

How much in high-life love intrigues abound.

*Bentley.*

VER. 239. *When e're a woman, etc.*] Thus Juvenal expresses himself upon the fury of a slighted woman,

*Mulier sævissima tunc est*

*Curra simules odio pudor admovet.*

*Bentley.*

VER. 244. *Upon the surface, etc.*] This metaphor is somewhat too bold, and not much in the manner of our author. I have therefore been strongly inclined to think that the MSS. has suffered in this place some injury from time, but I have not hitherto been able to restore the true reading.

*Scriblerus.*

VER. 246.] The power of the female tongue, may be justly considered as one of those extraordinary natural effects, the cause of which is not to be explained. *Causa latet, vis est nolissima.*

G.

VER. 247. *To the earth's center, etc.*] A passage manifestly corrupt. The idea of flying under ground, has something inconsistent and absurd in it. Read thus at my peril,

Into the coal-hole let her husband fly.

*Bentley.*

The impending horrors are not to be told,  
 The plague occasion'd by a clam'rous scold!  
 For nature will not change, nor discord cease,  
 That husbands may conclude their lives in peace.  
 What if the sailor, when a storm is high, 255  
 Should by a wish think to make still the sky;  
 What if the soldier, when the canons roar,  
 Should by a wish think concord to restore;  
 Just as absurd 'twould be for any spouse,  
 To hope always to have a quiet house: 260  
 Just as absurd to hope a wife to find  
 Free from the usual faults of womankind.

'Tis

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 252.] Nothing can be more just than the proverb,  
 It is better to live with a dragon than a scold. Philosophy  
 itself could not reconcile Socrates to the clamours of Xan-  
 tippe: That great man, who was a stranger to fear in the  
 field of battle, was often known to fly with precipitation  
 at the approach of the shrew his wife.

G.

VER. 253. *For nature will not, etc.*] To think to silence  
 the clamours of a scold, is in effect to expect to bring about  
 a change in nature as difficult to be effected, as it would  
 be to lay the storm, or stop the earth's diurnal motion. For  
 this reason I have always look'd upon Shakespeare's *Taming*  
*of the Shrew*, as a piece altogether absurd and incongruous.  
 A shrew is not to be tamed, Bentley.

## NOTES.

VER. 260: *To hope always, etc.*] That such a hope would  
 be altogether vain and ill-grounded, appears from the al-  
 tercation between Adam and Eve in *Paradise*. See my edi-  
 tion of *Paradise Lost*. Bentley.

# ESSAY ON WOMAN.

25

'Tis truth most evident, that man and wife  
Like soul and body, must be join'd for life.

Love in all varied, yet in all the same, 265  
Th' unmarried as the marry'd can inflame ;  
Warms the coquet, gives pleasure to the prude,  
Enlivens the serious, polishes the rude ;  
Sustains the soul, extends thro' all extent,  
And tho' still \*\*\* never is quite spent : 270

Breathes in our souls, our bosoms fills with fires,  
The punk and dutchess equally inspires ;  
As perfect in the country lass, as she  
That reads romances while she sips her tea.

Cease then, nor more love, fault or folly name, 275  
Our highest bliss springs from the sacred flame.

E

Know

## COMMENTARY.

VER. 263.] There may be a divorce between man and wife ; but this is the death of the nuptial union, just as the death of the body is a divorce between body and soul.

VER. 265. *Love in all vary'd, etc.*] I here very much suspect that the MSS. is faulty, yet such expressions are not unfrequent in poets of establish'd reputation. Thus Dryden in his Virgil,

How much another, yet how much the same !

*Scribblerus.*

## NOTES.

VER. 266. *Th' unmarried, etc.*] And generally much more the former than the latter. This gave occasion to the impious wish of Varinus, to have been born a bastard ; because the illegitimate, as Shakespeare expresses it,

Boast fiercer qualities, than those that bound  
The scanted births of the state marriage-bed.

G.



Know thy felicity, the due degree  
 Of am'rous joys that heaven bestows on thee.  
 Submit, or marry'd or unmarried still  
 Thou'rt always sure of love to have thy fill. 28  
 The coldest prude can love unknown to thee,  
 Her frowns are favours which thou can'st not see.  
 All scolding's fondness quite misunderstood ;  
 Wenching, tho' thought an evil, is a good :  
 And spight of pride, in erring nature's spight, 285  
 Man's in the wrong, and woman's in the right.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 279. *Submit, etc.*] The author here gives men, whether married or unmarried, excellent advice, namely, to bear with the inconveniencies inseparable from their conversation with the sex, rather than run into greater inconveniences by shunning them. G.

NOTES.

VER. 284. *Wenching tho' thought an evil.*] Mr. Becket, a learned surgeon of the last century, has wrote an elaborate treatise to prove that well-regulated brothels would be a public benefit. G.

VER. 286. *Man's in the wrong.*] This maxim is somewhat paradoxical, and will, I doubt, be found hard of digestion both by lovers and husbands.

Bentley.

The

## The M A I D's P R A Y E R.

C O M E Venus queen of soft desires  
Unloose a vigin's vest,  
And fan, oh ! fan those only fires,  
Which e'er can make her blest.

By love impell'd, his power I own,  
And at his altar bow,  
And that my truth be fully known ;  
Oh ! Venus hear my vow.

If I thy son's soft bondage flight,  
Or e'er his pow'r despise,  
Oh ! may in ev'ry future night,  
No lover bless these eyes.

The extatic glow, the grasp divine,  
The warm imprinted kiss ;  
Oh ! may they never more be mine,  
Nor the *more ardent* bliss !

The high, tumultuous tide-of joy  
Be banished from my heart,  
If e'er I own love's sweets can cloy,  
Or ever from them part.

Then help oh ! Venus, help the maid  
Who firm on thee relies,  
And, guided by thy mighty aid,  
Through love's soft lab'rinth hies.

FANNY's

## FANNY'S CHARMS.

TO sing my lovely Fanny's charms,  
 In all their native beauty bright,  
 When sinking in her lover's arms,  
 With *more than exquisite delight*.

Demands a more than mortal pen,  
 Requires *at least* celestial fire ;  
 And gods themselves, as well as men,  
 In vain might strike the sounding lyre.

But let us see what words *can* do,  
 The force of language let us try ;  
 And give, *if possible* to view  
 Those beauties which so strike the eye.

So strike the eye, so charm the heart,  
 So pour their influence o'er the soul ;  
 That like the light'ning's flash they dart,  
 Impetuous as the torrents roll.

## CHLOE'S GARTER.

FULL five times wrapp'd around her knee  
 And tuck'd till it in safety be ;  
 If he outlives it, happy he  
 Who *Chloe's* garter lives to see,  
 And lives to take it off beside.

Full

Full five times wrapp'd around my heart,  
 So safely it can never start,  
 Is *Chloe's* form, not force nor art  
 Can cause th' idea to depart,  
 Or can the gordian knot divide.

Should *Cupid* shelter there from view,  
 Which *Cupid* would, but dares not do,  
 And should unbind the ribband too,  
 O! think what numbers would pursue,  
 And think how great the victor's pride.

### W O M A N ' S   R E S O L U T I O N .

O H, cried *Arsenia*, long in wedlock blest,  
 Her head reclining on her husband's breast,  
 Should death divide thee from thy doating wife,  
 What comfort could be found in widow'd life?  
 How the thought shakes me! — heav'n my  
*Strephon* save!

Or give the lost *Arsenia* half his grave!

*Jove* heard the lovely mourner, and approv'd,  
 And should not wives, said he, like this, be lov'd?  
 Take the soft sorrower at her word and try  
 How firmly rooted female truth can lie.

'Twas said and done! — the tender *Strephon* dy'd,  
*Arsenia* two long months t'outlive him try'd!  
 But in the *third*, — alas! — became a bride. }

### The P R O G R E S S of L O V E .

NATURE when she form'd a man,  
 Gave a soul for love design'd

Love



Love with life at first began,  
And possess'd his infant mind.

When upon the breast he lay,  
Love began to grow within ;  
With his milk, he ev'ry day,  
Suck'd the soothing passion in.

First, a feeble spark, it glow'd,  
Glow'd and brighter still became ;  
Beauty fuel soon bestow'd,  
Youth increas'd it to a flame.---

Till by age and weakness worn,  
Half extinguish'd it shall lie ;  
Thus was ev'ry mortal born,  
Once to love, and once to die.

## The P I O U S N U N.

JANE a young bantling having had  
Led life austere, seem'd very sad ;  
Whilst her gay sister nuns and mates  
Were ever peeping at the grates.  
The abbess to her daughters said,  
In a grave speech, which she had made ;  
Lead, daughters, lead the life of *Jane* ;  
Fly, fly the world, and all things vain :  
To which they answer'd in this strain :  
Pious as *Jane* we all will be,  
When we have done as much as she.

The

## The L O V E R C O O L D.

**A**S *Cælia* by a river past,  
 Where silver streams did glide,  
 Her shadow such a splendor cast,  
 As taught her scorn and pride.  
*Damon* at distance views the fair,  
 Kneels suppliant for a kiss,  
 While she with scornful haughty air,  
 Denies the little bliss.  
*Damon* would not denial take,  
 His love-sick fever stung him;  
 Begone, said she, — and in her rage,  
 She in the river flung him.  
 She arm'd with pride, he weak with love,  
 By *Cælia* was fool'd;  
 How he got out I never heard,  
 But all his love was cool'd.

## The A R T of W O O I N G.

**H**E that loves, and fears to try,  
 Learns his mistress to deny.  
 Does she chide thee? 'tis to shew it,  
 That thy coldness makes her do it.

Is she silent? Is she mute?  
 Silence surely gains thy suit:  
 Does she pout, and leave the room?  
 She withdraws to bid thee come.

Is she sick? why then be sure,  
 She invites thee to the cure:  
 Does she cross thy suit with no?  
 Tush! she loves to hear thee woo.

Does she call the faith of man  
 In question? Good! she loves thee then;  
 And if e'er she makes a blot,  
 She's lost if that thou hitt'st it not.

He that after ten denials,  
 Dares attempt no farther trials,  
 Hath no warrant to acquire  
 The dainties of his chaste desire.

### Solid Worth in a W I F E.

W H E N *Loveless* marry'd lady *Jenny*,  
 Whose beauty was the ready penny:  
 I chose her, says he, like old plate,  
 Not for the fashion, but the weight.

### The Scotch W E A T H E R - W I F E.

S C O T L A N D, thy *weather's* like a modish wife;  
 Thy *winds* and *rains* maintain perpetual strife;  
 So *terragent*, a while, her *thunder* hies;  
 And when she can no longer *scold*---she *cries*.

F I N I S.

